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THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Officers


NFAC #4125/80

6 June 1980

NOTE FOR: DD/NFA, AC/NIC, NIOs,
and SRP

SUBJECT : Agenda Items for 10 June
NIC Warning Meeting

Next week's NIC warning meeting has been
cancelled, but since the tentative agenda
items were already in the typewriter, I am
forwarding them to you for information.


Acting
National Intelligence Officer
for Warning

Attachment

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NIC Warning Agenda: Potential Warning Developments over the next 90 days.I. The Two Koreas:

A. The military takeover of Kwangju on 27 May demonstrated that Lt. Gen. Chun Doo Hwan and his associates are capable of controlling domestic opposition, at least for the near-term. Subsequent events suggest a certain public fatalism in accepting an indefinite extension of martial law controls.

B. The potential for further eruptions of anti-regime violence, however, resides in the fact that the problems that precipitated the demonstrations in May not only remain unresolved but have been aggravated. There is a general public perception that Chun Doo Hwan intends to perpetuate the fundamentals of the late President Pak's Yushin system and that he will tolerate no more than cosmetic gestures toward political liberalization. Popular opposition to military authority exercised through the new Special Committee for National Security Measures almost certainly will grow in the next few months in the absence of credible assurances and progress on constitutional revision looking toward national elections early next year. This prospect of a widening divergence between public sentiment and Chun Doo Hwan's evident determination to perpetuate his preponderant authority carries serious dangers of further uprisings and a break in the unity of the South Korean military leadership. At the end of May some senior military officers were concerned about negative public attitudes toward the military and the use of the Army to quell the Kwangju uprising.

C. Much would seem to depend on Chun's ability to neutralize both public hostility and suspicions of his intentions within the political and military establishments—a task requiring exceptional political skills. If Chun overreaches or commits serious blunders, resentment in the officer corps and plotting against him may revive. (Alert Memorandum of 8 February) Missteps by

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Chun may stimulate a coalescence of military and political opponents, creating a situation in which a showdown might be unavoidable. In early May, for example, President Choi reportedly feared that military suppression of student demonstrations could be the first of a series of actions which would threaten the US-ROK alliance. Following the declaration of nationwide martial law on 17 May, senior KCIA officials expressed concern that this action and the detention of student and political leaders would increase turmoil rather than calm the situation.

D. In sum, despite Chun's chain of successes in aggrandizing his power, the potential for a serious challenge to his position remains. The scope and timing of such a challenge would depend on Chun's own actions and on events that are unpredictable by any of the major actors in South Korea.

North Korean Intentions

E. Events in the South since early May have created a dilemma for the North Korean leadership. On the one hand, Kim Il-song, since the 1953 armistice, has looked forward to a "revolutionary uprising" in the South as the only realistic avenue to reunification under the North's domination. He has repeatedly declared that if a revolution occurs in the South, the North would not stand idly by "with arms folded" but would "strongly support the South Korean people." On the other hand, Kim recognizes that any threatening moves by the North in the present circumstances would play directly into the hands of Chun Doo-hwan. Pyongyang's repeated declarations over the past month that the North will not intervene and its avoidance of conspicuous military moves are obviously aimed at undercutting Chun's ability to invoke the "threat from the North" to justify his actions.

F. North Korea's immediate aim is to discredit Chun, forestall the consolidation of his power, and encourage public opposition in the South.

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Pyongyang's propaganda is denouncing Chun with invective reminiscent of that employed against Pak Chong-hui. The North Koreans went ahead with a working-level meeting at Panmunjom on 22 May (to arrange prime ministerial talks) despite what they termed the "complicated" situation in the South, but it seems likely that the North will soon announce its withdrawal from the talks on the ground that the takeover by "military fascist elements" in Seoul precludes any prospect of agreement.

North Korean Options:

G. Although Pyongyang so far has followed a "rational" course calculated to play for time in the hope that Chun Doo Hwan will prove unable to keep the lid on, if events in the South in the coming weeks work to consolidate Chun's authority the North Koreans, seeing their historic opportunity fading rapidly, may gamble on high risk actions out of desperation to reverse this trend.

—An attempt to assassinate Chun. (The Blue House raid to eliminate President Pak Chong-hui in January 1968 and the landing of some 120 guerrillas at Ulchan the following November were conceived as "the spark that would touch off the revolution!")

—Infiltration of North Korean special forces with the mission of provoking violence that could be turned against the Seoul regime. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

—A contrived clash along the DMZ which North Korea would contend was initiated by Chun Doo-Hwan's "fascist clique." Such an incident would be calculated to discredit Chun and generate alarm over his "irresponsible" leadership in the South, the US, and the international business community.

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Possibility of North Korean Miscalculations:

H. If violent demonstrations recur in the South and spread to areas that hitherto have been quiet, Kim Il-song might be tempted to revert to his

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1966-68 "armed struggle" tactics of large-scale infiltration of agents and guerrillas in an attempt to foment a "revolutionary crisis." (Kim has not forgotten the lessons of his failure to exploit the disarray in 1960-61 that led to the overthrow of the Rhee government. He later reportedly said that "Had there been 50 hard-core Marxist-Leninists to properly plan and direct the riots, revolution in South Korea could have been accomplished in either April 1960 or May 1961.")

I. There would seem to be no more than a marginal chance of a conventional attack across the DMZ unless South Korea should descend into a state of chaos and virtual civil war in which the ROK Army chain of command and military discipline had collapsed. Kim Il-song has frequently renounced "invasion" as a means of reunifying Korea and has consistently confined his projected use of force to "revolutionary means." In North Korean eyes, the principal deterrent to a conventional military attack on the South has always been US air and naval power, not the presence of American ground forces. The North Koreans were clearly taken aback by the demonstration of US air and naval power in response to the Panmunjom "tree cutting" incident in August 1976, and it seems unlikely that they would be inclined to discount this formidable deterrent in 1980. One hedge to this judgment might be in order: Under unprecedented pressures generated by opportunities created by a state of chaos and a collapse of military command and discipline in the South, Kim Il-song might be prepared to gamble on an attack across the DMZ. Four years ago, there were elusive hints of differences in military thinking between Kim and his veteran associates such as Defense Minister O Chin-u, on the one hand, and some younger professional military officers, on the other. Kim and most of the older military leaders continued to advocate the doctrine of prolonged guerrilla warfare, while the opposing school at the second level of the command structure emphasized modern

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weapons and a "lightning war for a quick decision." Much would depend on the North's assessment of the credibility of US warnings that the US Government "will react strongly in accordance with its treaty obligations to any external attempt to exploit the situation in the Republic of Korea."

II. Iran-Iraq:

A. Iraqi troop movements since late May and the clash at Mehran on 30 May—the largest this year—have raised further questions about the near-term intentions of both sides. Current intelligence continues to stress the

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improbability of major hostilities and has focused on the movement of Iraqi armored forces south from Baghdad as a "key indicator" of an impending Iraqi invasion of Iran.

B. Query: Does this imply an assumption that the target of any Iraqi offensive operations would be Khuzestan? If so, does this assumption deserve to be reexamined?:

—On 26 April, Iraq ordered collection of information about Iranian troop dispositions in the northern border area.

—Iranian officials have expressed concern that Iraq's main objective will be to encourage separatism in the Kurdish areas.

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—The 1 June clash along the south-central border occurred in an area where Iranian exile groups backed by Iraq and their ethnic allies are concentrating their efforts against Tehran.

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C. Should the warning focus be redirected from the "key indicator" of a southward deployment of the two armored divisions at Baghdad to greater attention to the central and northern border areas? Do Iraqi intentions center more on support for installing an exile Iranian regime on Iranian territory in the Kurdish areas and less on an armored attack across the southern border?

D. Are the Iranians maneuvering to draw Syria more deeply into the confrontation with Iraq?

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E. Unconfirmed reports that President Saddam Husayn was the target of an assassination attempt in late May, and Syrian and Iranian support for the Shia Da'Wa Party in Iraq suggest that the Iranian-Iraqi confrontation is more "political" than "military." Reports that Syria and Iran are collaborating in attempts to assassinate Baathist leaders and overthrow the Baghdad regime, and Iraqi support for the Bakhtiar and Oveissi exile movements [REDACTED]

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III. Ethiopia-Somalia:

A. Military developments in the Ogaden so far do not suggest that the Ethiopians are preparing for a major attack into northern Somalia in the next month or so. But the reinforcement by both sides of regular forces in the Ogaden raises the question whether their intentions extend beyond the chronic struggle for control of this province.

B. Are current military developments in the Ogaden related to negotiations on a US-Somali agreement providing for US access to Somali ports and bases for the Rapid Deployment Force and for US military assistance to Somalia and perhaps some form of US security commitment?

—Are the Somalis deliberately escalating the Ogaden conflict in an effort to elicit more favorable terms from the US by dramatizing the "threat" from the Ethiopians (and Cubans and Soviets)?

—Do the Ethiopians perceive a US-Somali agreement as presenting a long-term threat to their position in the Ogaden and, more generally, in the Horn of Africa?

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C. If the Ethiopians now view the contest as transcending the issue of control over the Ogaden, will they be impelled to take strong military action in the next three months aimed at forestalling or countering a US-Somali agreement?

25X1 [] 17 May stated that Ethiopia plans to conduct an attack into northern Somalia in order to "preempt a Somali attack against Harar and that it will be carried out before the Somalis can acquire foreign military support.

—In a talk with the US ambassador on 31 May, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Feleke referred to US negotiations with Somalia for military facilities and emphasized that Ethiopia "should not be provoked" or its "integrity threatened."

D. Some Community Soviet specialists are said to believe that Moscow would discourage any Ethiopian plans to launch major cross-border operations against Somalia. Soviet opposition to Ethiopian cross-border strikes during the 1978 Ogaden war is cited as a precedent. Are the 1978 and 1980 situations parallel? Would the Soviets now be more inclined to endorse an Ethiopian military venture aimed in part at blocking US access to Somali facilities and the establishment of a stronger US presence in the Horn?

IV. Cuba—Castro's Next Move:

A. Events since the easing of the anti-US campaign that followed the island-wide demonstrations on 17 May have not clarified Castro's intentions. The impasse over the 381 Cubans in the US Interests Section continues, and Castro, through an editorial in Granma on 19 May, in effect rejected President Carter's offer of an airlift or sealift if the Cuban government agreed to an orderly screening of refugees by US officials. There has been no follow-up

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to Granma's insistence that Cuba is no longer willing to discuss "partial solutions" and that "basics" must now be confronted, namely, the US trade embargo, the naval base at Guantanamo, and reconnaissance overflights. Granma declared that Cuba is unwilling to wait for "more wisdom or better times" in Washington to initiate negotiations.

B. Was this mid-May rhetoric simply a cover for a Cuban retreat from confrontation, or is Castro still resolved to draw the US into negotiations on "basic" bilateral issues?

—The Cubans persuaded East German President Honecker to sign a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation on 31 May which expressed joint opposition to the US base at Guantanamo, the economic embargo, and overflights.

C. Has Castro decided to withhold further moves until the US presidential election campaign gets underway this summer?

—Does he hope to marshal support for his demands from the Non-Aligned Movement? (Cuba's 30 May announcement that it had initiated consultations with NAM members to examine convoking an "extraordinary plenary ministerial conference" in Havana in June.)

D. How do we interpret (1) Cuba's apparent moves to liquidate the problem of Cuban refugees still in the Peruvian embassy, and (2) reports on 2 June that Cuban authorities have ordered all remaining US boats to leave Mariel within 24 hours?

V. China-Vietnam:

A. Does Beijing's apparent concern that trends and time in Southeast Asia are operating against China's long-term influence foreshadow some attempts to arrest this process? The Chinese have privately complained that some ASEAN

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members are pursuing policies of accommodation toward Vietnam which are eroding China's efforts to isolate Hanoi.

B. Although Foreign Minister Thach achieved no success in inducing the Thais to modify their policy on Kampuchea, the Vietnamese seem to believe time is in their favor. He suggested that Hanoi and Bangkok let the question rest for three or four months, and he sought to impress the Thais with Hanoi's benevolent intentions by offering to sign a non-aggression treaty.

C. The Chinese are said to believe that Prime Minister Prem wishes to stop the flow of Chinese assistance to the Pol Pot forces through Thailand, and they may be concerned that the Vietnamese will make significant progress toward winning a UN seat for the Heng Samrin regime at next fall's General Assembly—which would sanction Hanoi's contention that the situation in Kampuchea is "irreversible."

D. The Chinese appear to be casting about for some way to halt the erosion of their prospects in Southeast Asia. The ambassador to Thailand has revived the notion that China may have to punish Vietnam again to persuade it to negotiate on Kampuchea. The Chinese are demonstrating their displeasure by moving ground attack aircraft south and increasing bomber activity in the Guangzhou region bordering Vietnam.

E. The question for warning judgment is how seriously do the Chinese view the adverse trends in Southeast Asia and how far will they be prepared to go in defending their interests in the region?

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